words of different lengths from a code table and has a raster with equidistant raster points [(10, 12, 14)], where the code words include priority code words, which represent particular spectral values of a block of spectral values which are psychoacoustically important compared to other spectral values, where the block of spectral values represents a spectrum of a block of temporal samples of the audio signal and where priority code words are aligned with raster points, so that the start of a priority code word representing a spectral value of the block of spectral values coincides with one raster point and the start of another priority code word representing another spectral value of the block of spectral values coincides with another raster point, comprising the following steps:

(a) detecting the distance (D1) between two adjacent raster points;

(b) resorting the priority code words, which are aligned with the raster points, in the coded bit stream in such a way as to obtain a linear arrangement of the same with frequency, the start of a priority code word coinciding with a raster point;

(c) decoding the priority code words with an associated code table to obtain decoded spectral values; and

(d) transforming the decoded spectral values back into the time domain to obtain a decoded audio signal.

24. A method according to claim 23 [for decoding a bit stream representing a coded audio signal], where the coded bit stream contains code words of different lengths from at least two code tables and has a raster with at least two

groups of equidistant raster points [(10, 12, 14 and 14, 16, 18), where the code words include priority code words, which represent particular spectral values which are psychoacoustically important compared to other spectral values, and where priority code words are aligned with raster points, comprising] including the following steps:

[detecting the distance (D1, D2) between two adjacent raster points;

resorting the priority code words, which are aligned with the raster points, in the coded bit stream in such a way as to obtain a linear arrangement of the same with frequency, the start of a priority code word coinciding with a raster point;]

identifying the code table associated with a spectral section; and

where, in the step of decoding, the priority code words of a spectral section are decoded with the corresponding associated code table [to obtain decoded spectral values; and

transforming the decoded spectral values back into the time domain to obtain a decoded audio signal].

25. A device for for decoding a bit stream representing a coded audio signal, where the coded bit stream contains code words of different lengths from a code table and has a raster with equidistant raster points [(10, 12, 14)], where the code words include priority code words, which represent particular spectral values of a block of spectral values which are psychoacoustically important compared to other spectral values, where the block of spec-

tral values represents a spectrum of a block of temporal samples of the audio signal and where priority code words are aligned with raster points, so that the start of a priority code word representing a spectral value of the block of spectral values coincides with one raster point and the start of another priority code word representing another spectral value of the block of spectral values coincides with another raster point, comprising:

(a) a unit for detecting the distance [(D1)] between two adjacent raster points;

(b) a unit for resorting the priority code words, which are aligned with the raster points, in the coded bit stream in such a way as to obtain a linear arrangement of the same with frequency, the start of a priority code word coinciding with a raster point;

(c) a unit for decoding the priority code words with an associated code table to obtain decoded spectral values; and

(d) a unit for transforming the decoded spectral values back into the time domain to obtain a decoded audio signal.

26. A device according to claim 25 [for decoding a bit stream representing a coded audio signal], where the coded bit stream contains code words of different lengths from at least two code tables and has a raster with at least two groups of equidistant raster points [(10, 12, 14 and 14, 16, 18), where the code words include priority code words, which represent particular spectral values which are psychoacoustically important compared to other spectral values, and where priority code words are aligned with raster